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Cheryl Lin, one of Shen Yun Performing Arts' lead dancers.

Becoming Mulan

LEAD THE TROOPS. That was a tall order for Shen Yun principal dancer Cheryl Lin. She was dancing the roles of Mulan and Mu Guying, both ancient Chinese women who valiantly fought to defend their families and homeland.

At first, Cheryl struggled. Her personality didn't fit with the characters, and her dance movements couldn't keep up.

But then her understanding of the women deepened. She realized that they risked everything because they felt loyalty and responsibility, which she then saw as a kind of beauty.

Cheryl's new understanding allowed her to express the inner meaning of the dance through her movements, a unique component of classical Chinese dance known as "bearing" or "yun."

Shen Yun performances emphasize this inner meaning, which connects deeply with the audience.

"[In Shen Yun,] a dance move is taught as a story or a picture. For instance, when an arm makes a stroke, it is like a wild goose flying across the sky between the blue sea and white clouds," said Cheryl.

See
Becoming Mulan
on inside back page

PURE BEAUTY

WHEN THE CURTAIN goes up on a Shen Yun performance, what will you see? The radiance of the dancers. The exquisite grace of their movements. The mesmerizing display of the animated backdrops and handmade costumes. All this gives the audience an almost overwhelming sense of consummate beauty. It is a vision of loveliness not to be missed, and one that will never be forgotten.

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PURE SPIRITUALITY

IN NEARLY every culture, artists have sought divine inspiration to bring meaning to their art. Today, Shen Yun's artists follow in this noble tradition, incorporating mindfulness and meditation into their lives. Many of Shen Yun's programs also carry themes and artistry that are divinely inspired. The result? A spiritual radiance that shines on stage, conveying a sense of purity and compassion that many in the audience can feel.

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CUBA'S EXILE OVER

Restoring relations. President Obama says the U.S. will restore diplomatic relations with Cuba after 53 years. PAGES 8-9

A vintage American car next to a wall painting of Cuban revolutionary Che Guevara in Havana. / GETTY IMAGES

Bodegas fear beer price hike from merger

PAGE 02

Three actors who shocked us in 2014

PAGE 17

A party for every New Year's Eve reveler

PAGE 31

Fantasy FB: Players to never trust again

PAGE 34

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1 NEWS

Top 3

The best of Metro.us

1 'Review: "The Interview," for whatever it's worth, is really funny'

2 'Kale me when it's over: Food and diet trends of 2014'

3 'Video proof that Britney Spears abs weren't Photoshopped'

On the go

Want to read Metro on your mobile device? Get the app! All you have to do is search for Metro US in the App Store or Google Play to get all the latest in news, sports, lifestyle and entertainment for free.

A bodega on East Houston Street in Manhattan / MILES DIXON, METRO

Beer price increase feared by bodegas

Business. A planned merger of beer distributors has bodegas concerned six-pack prices could rise.

Plans to merge two of New York City's largest beer distributors could lead to higher six-pack prices at New York's all-night food stores, and trade groups representing smaller distributors and bodega owners say they want the federal government to block the merger.

Manhattan Beer and Phoenix/Beehive plan to combine forces in early 2015. Manhattan, which has facilities in Bronx, Queens, Long Island and Hudson Valley, distributes brands including Blue Moon, Corona, Sam Adams and Modelo. Phoenix/Beehive in Kings County distributes Heineken, Presidente and Brooklyn Brewery.

One distribution company manager in Brooklyn, who did not want to be identified by name, told Metro word of the merger first made rounds in October. Neither Manhattan nor Phoenix/Beehive responded to inquiries.

"Businesses like us are already dropping like flies," the Brooklyn distributor said. "It's already hard enough for us to compete."

A small sample of bodega owners in Manhattan's East Village indicated the retailers aren't paying much attention.

Park Wan Hee, owner of Bueno East Mart on Avenue A, said he had only recently heard about the merger. Hee said he uses both distributors but wasn't worried about potential price hikes.

"We sell a lot of beer," Hee said. "[If the prices go up] people will still buy."

Myra and Rafael Rosa opened Santa Barbara Deli on Avenue B in 1993. Unlike Hee, Myra said she could see some blowback on her business.

"If they raise the price too much, people don't want to pay," she said, "They can do what they want, but I hope they keep prices stable."

"I don't think we've seen what it actually means for someone like me yet," said Zach Mack, who opened Alphabet City Beer Co. on Avenue C in 2012, with beer to go and on tap. "And I definitely don't think we've seen what it means for customers."

Visit **Metro.us** to read more about the effects of the price increase.

Quoted

"The growing beer monopoly is a threat to both independent beer distributors and the 13,000 bodegas they help to service."
The Bodega Association

CHESTER JESUS SORIA
@chestersoria
chester.soria@metro.us

Gambling

New York approves three upstate casinos

Upstate New Yorkers looking to gamble will soon get their fix, as the New York Gaming Commission approved plans Wednesday to build three casinos in the Catskills, Finger Lakes and Capital regions.

The five-person Gaming Facility Location Board made the decision after reviewing bids from 16 proposed casinos. Final choices were based on considerations of economic activity and business development, local impact and siting and workforce enhancement. METRO

Transportation

Chinatown to Boston bus line back

Fung Wah Bus will soon hit the streets again.

The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration shut down the company's operations for 18 months over cracked frames, poor driver fitness and extended hours of service. But the fleet will again be transporting passengers between New York and Boston for cheap by early 2015. METRO

Fung Wah is back.
NICOLAUS CZARNECKI

Passersby look in the window of a New York pet store.
MILES DIXON, METRO

Cats and Dogs. Rough time for puppy mills as City Council bans inhumanely raised pets

New York City pet shops will have to show that the animals they sell are bred humanely and not the product of notorious puppy and kitten mills, under a law passed Wednesday by the City Council.

With few puppy mills inside city limits, the bill takes aim at animal brokers, who link pet shops with factory breeders. Mills often breed vast numbers of litters and kill or discard imperfect puppies and kittens.

The new law requires pet shops to provide verifiable information about the breeding source of cats, dogs and rabbits offered for sale.

Its sponsors, Council members Elizabeth Crowley and Corey Johnson, said it will help block brokers from selling animals from questionable sources in the city's pet stores.

The law also requires all animals sold in the city to be spayed or neutered and be implanted with an identifying microchip to reduce pet homelessness and overpopulation.

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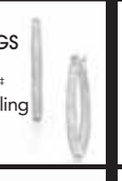

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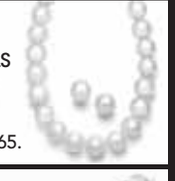

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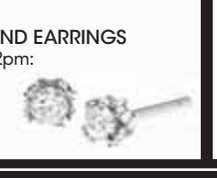

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City Council moves to limit drone use

Flying. Council moves to rein in drone use after close calls at JFK.

A drone equipped with a camera / GETTY

Eyes in the skies look to be shot down if a bill introduced by City Councilman Paul Vallone, regulating the public use of drones in New York City, is approved.

The bill would bar individuals from flying drones for surveillance, or with the intent of harming people or property. Drones would be banned at altitudes above 400 feet, at night and near schools and airports. At least three passenger jets reported near-collisions with drones at Kennedy Airport this year.

Fly in the face of the law, and you could be fined up to $1,000 or spend a year in prison.

Federal laws will still trump city drone regs, said Vallone aide Lionel Morales. "If Amazon, for example, were to be given approval to fly commercial drones then that approval would supersede our bill."

Banning drones at schools "squelches the potential for learning," said Steve Cohen, a member of the New York City Drone User Group, which unites about 1,000 amateur and professional drone users. Cohen said he hopes to invite the councilman and his peers to a NYCDUG meet-up, where he can introduce them to real locals using drone technology in positive ways.

"People come away with a very different impression of what these drones are," Cohen said.

Quote

"Nobody is really looking to do any kind of security or espionage or spying. It's really about the learning." Cohen

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Pyongyanked. Sony pulls Rogen North Korea comedy over threat

"The Interview" is over.

Sony Pictures is pulling the madcap comedy "The Interview" from theaters across the U.S. after receiving emailed threats thought to be from hackers who broke into the studio's computer system saying the James Franco-Kim Jong Un bromance insults Communist North Korea.

"It's too bad that we're being bullied like this," said retiree Marilyn Evans, 67, outside the Lower East Side's Landmark Sunshine cinema, which on Tuesday canceled the film's world premiere. "It's too bad that [North Korea is] going to win."

"We respect and understand our partners' decision and, of course, completely share their paramount interest in the safety of employees and theatergoers," Sony Pictures said in a statement.

The U.S. government believes North Korea is behind the hacking.

The marquee of Landmark's Sunshine cinema with no sign of "The Interview." / MILES DIXON, METRO

Threat

"We recommend you to keep yourself distant from the places at that time. [If your house is nearby, you'd better leave.] Whatever comes in the coming days is called by the greed of Sony Pictures Entertainment."

Guardians of Peace

The movie follows Franco and Seth Rogen as journalists who snag an interview with Kim, and are coerced by the CIA into helping them assassinate the North Korean tyrant.

Hackers calling themselves Guardians of Peace, threatened earlier this week that "the world will be full of fear," and warned people to "remember the 11th of September 2001" if "The Interview" is released.

Evans said the scandal's been great publicity for the film. CHESTER JESUS SORIA

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US plans to normalize relations with Cuba

Fidel Castro. Cuba and the U.S. have been ideological foes since soon after the 1959 revolution.

President Barack Obama greets Cuban President Raul Castro at the memorial service for Nelson Mandela. / REUTERS

The United States will restore diplomatic relations it severed with Cuba more than 50 years ago, a major policy shift ending decades of hostile ties with the communist-ruled island, President Barack Obama said on Wednesday.

Announcing the end of what he called a "rigid" policy of isolation of Cuba that had been ineffective, Obama said the United States would move toward normal ties and would open an embassy in Cuba.

Obama discussed the changes with Cuban President Raul Castro on Tuesday in a nearly hour-long telephone call. Castro spoke in Cuba as Obama made his announcement on a policy shift made possible by the release of American Alan Gross, 65, who had been imprisoned in Cuba for five years.

Obama said Pope Francis, the first Latin American pontiff, had played an active role in pressing for Gross's release. A sizable part of Cuba's population is Roman Catholic. The Vatican worked closely with both sides and hosted in-person meetings of U.S. officials, senior Obama administration officials said.

Cuba is also releasing an intelligence agent who spied for the United States and was held for nearly 20 years, and the United States in return freed three Cuban intelligence agents held in the U.S.

Gross' case had been

How will Obama relax US Cuba policy

Here are some of the the key changes:

- The U.S. will open an embassy in Havana.
- During the next six months, Secretary of State John Kerry will review Cuba's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism.
- U.S. officials will hold high-level talks with Cuban counterparts on issues like migration, narcotics, environmental protections and human trafficking.
- U.S. officials will discuss maritime boundaries with Cuba and Mexico in the Gulf of Mexico.
- More Americans will be allowed to travel to Cuba.
- The overall travel ban can only be lifted by Congress, so tourism will not be allowed.
- Travel licenses will be available for family visits, journalists, professional research and professional meetings, educational activities, religious activities, performances and athletic competitions, humanitarian projects and certain export activities.

Anti-Castro activists Osvaldo Hernandez, left, and Miguel Saavedra protest in Little Havana in Miami. / REUTERS

a block to any movement by Washington toward improved ties. Obama said Pope Francis had played an active role in pressing for his release. Francis congratulated both countries on their forging of diplomatic ties.

The policy shift will mean a relaxation in some aspects of commerce and transportation between the United States and Cuba, but it does not mean an end to the long-standing trade embargo, which needs congressional approval that Obama may face a struggle getting.

And while travel restrictions that currently make it hard for most Americans to visit will be eased, the door will not yet be open for broad U.S. tourism on the Caribbean island.

Cuba and the United States have not had diplomatic relations since 1961 and the U.S. has maintained its trade embargo on the island, 90 miles south of Florida, for more than 50 years. Obama said he would ask Congress to lift the embargo.

Obama will likely face resistance on this.

Although a growing number of U.S. lawmakers favor more normal ties with Cuba, those lawmakers are still mostly Democrats, and after big midterm election gains in November, Republicans will control both houses of Congress in the new year.

News of the changes rippled fast through the 1.5 million-strong Cuban American community in the United States, hailed by some who are keen to see closer ties with the island and condemned by others who have opposed any warming while either of the Castro brothers is in power. **REUTERS**

On Twitter

"Excited to see if change in U.S. policy will help us learn more about the many refugees who went to/through Cuba pre-WWII. @HolocaustMuseum"

@rebeccaarchivist

"If you're the President of the United States, you don't get to name drop very often, so it's gotta be fun to mention talking to the Pope"

@BJNobak

Marco Rubio

Senator pledges to block efforts

Florida Sen. Marco Rubio said on Wednesday he would "make every effort" to block moves by President Obama toward normalizing relations with the Cuban government.

"The president's decision to reward the Castro regime and begin the path toward the normalization of relations with Cuba is inexplicable," Rubio said in a statement.

The Florida Republican senator, who is Cuban-American, said he would use his role as chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee's Western Hemisphere subcommittee in the new Congress to try to block the plan. **REUTERS**

Timeline

Here are some key events:

- **Jan. 1, 1959:** U.S.-backed dictator Fulgencio Batista flees Cuba as Fidel Castro and his revolutionaries seize control.
- **Jan. 3, 1961:** The U.S. breaks off diplomatic relations with Cuba after the nationalization of U.S.-owned properties.
- **April 16, 1961:** Castro declares his revolution to be socialist. The next day, CIA-backed Cuban exiles try to invade Cuba at the Bay of Pigs, but are defeated.
- **Feb. 7, 1962:** The U.S. imposes a complete commercial embargo against Cuba that remains in place.
- **Oct. 1962:** The U.S. discovers Soviet nuclear missiles on Cuba, leading to a showdown with the Soviet Union that almost leads to war. The confrontation ends with the Russians removing the missiles and the U.S. agreeing never to invade Cuba, and pulling its missiles from Turkey.
- **April-Oct. 1980:** Cuba allows 125,000 people to travel to the U.S. from the port of Mariel in what becomes known as the Mariel Boatlift.
- **Dec. 1991:** The Soviet Union, Cuba's biggest benefactor, collapses, touching off an economic crisis from which the island has not fully recovered.
- **July 31, 2006:** Fidel Castro provisionally turns over power to his brother, Raul Castro, after undergoing emergency surgery.
- **Feb. 24, 2008:** The National Assembly elects Raul Castro to formally replace the ailing Fidel.
- **Dec. 2009:** Cuba arrests Alan Gross. It later convicts the U.S. Agency for International Development subcontractor to 15 years in prison after accusing him of importing banned technology and trying to establish a clandestine Internet service for Cuban Jews.
- **Dec. 17, 2014:** Gross is released in exchange for three Cuban intelligence agents held in America. **REUTERS**

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Transportation app Uber is seen on the iPhone in a limousine. / REUTERS

Uber reviewing safety programs

Safety. Recent problems involving screening Uber drivers has surfaced.

Uber Technologies Inc. said it began an assessment of its safety programs amid mounting questions about its driver-screening process.

The San Francisco-based mobile car-booking company named former Amazon.com Inc. executive Tim Collins to lead global support, according to a blog post today by Philip Cardenas, Uber's head of global safety.

The review, started in November, will determine where greater investment in safety is required, including possible improvements in technology, background checks and incident-response teams to offer support, Uber said.

The startup has faced criticism over the safety of its rides. Earlier this month, the company had to grapple with allegations that one of its drivers raped a woman in New Delhi.

An Uber driver was also charged in San Francisco this month for killing a 6-year-old girl crossing a city street last New Year's Eve. Critics have questioned whether safety is an Achilles' heel for Uber.

"We are reminded by the recent tragic event in India that best-in-class safety must be a constant quest," Cardenas wrote.

Uber is the most highly valued U.S. technology startup. The company raised $1.2 billion earlier this month at a valuation of $40 billion.

Wednesday, Chinese Web company Baidu Inc., said it had invested in the mobile car-booking company, which is led by Chief Executive Officer Travis Kalanick. **BLOOMBERG**

Quoted

"We owe it to all our riders, driver partners and communities around the world to examine what we can do better and then do everything we can to make more progress on safety." Cardenas

Ten-month ordeal

NH man charged with raping teen

A New Hampshire man repeatedly raped a teenage girl, binding her and using a "Taser-like" device to punish her over the 10-month period he held her in a shipping container, state prosecutors charged in court documents on Wednesday.

Nathaniel Kibby, 34, was charged with more than 150 counts of felonious sexual assault against the victim, who was not identified but is believed to be a 15-year-old who disappeared in October 2013 from the mountain town of Conway. **REUTERS**

Montana. Man found guilty in slaying of German student

A jury found a Montana homeowner guilty of deliberate homicide on Wednesday in the shooting death of a German high school exchange student who entered his garage in a case that tested the state's version of a "castle doctrine" self-defense law.

Markus Kaarma, who prosecutors painted as an armed aggressor who lured a would-be burglar to his death, was charged in connection with the April death of Diren Dede, 17, of Hamburg, who authorities say was killed while "garage hopping" at night in Missoula in a possible search for alcohol.

Markus Kaarma / REUTERS

Prosecutors argued during the trial that Kaarma had installed motion detectors and a baby monitor days before the shooting and left a purse filled with cash and other items in the garage on the day Dede was killed in a shooting that sparked outrage in Germany. **REUTERS**

Johns Hopkins Univ. accidentally accepted almost 300 people

Mistake. It was caused by 'human error at a vendor working for our undergraduate admissions office.'

Milton S. Eisenhower Library at Johns Hopkins University / TWITTER

Nearly 300 students who were rejected from Johns Hopkins University last Friday were stunned to receive a chipper email days later with the subject line, "Embrace the YES!"

The 294 rejected applicants were presumably still working on embracing the "No" when they received a congratulatory email from the school on Sunday. Johns Hopkins spokesman Dennis O'Shea confirmed in an email that the notes were sent in error. The rejected-then-fake-accepted students, whom the email called the "newest members of the family," were urged to take their celebrations to Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and congratulated for being "among the first with the right to use #JHU2019." They could also join an exclusive Facebook group for admitted students to begin fraternizing with fellow members of the Class of 2019.

Within hours, the school realized it had goofed and emailed students to apologize, blaming a "technical mistake." For most, the pain and confusion had already set in. BLOOMBERG

Quoted

"I'd been wanting to go to Johns Hopkins since the beginning of high school ... I was really bummed out."

Elmer Rajah
a senior from Randolph, New Jersey

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Anger and grief as Pakistan buries the dead students

People carry the coffin of a male student who was killed in Tuesday's attack. / REUTERS

Toll. 148 people were killed in the attack on the military-run Army Public School, according to the army.

A shocked Pakistan on Wednesday began burying 132 students killed in a grisly attack on their school by Taliban militants that has heaped pressure on the government to do more to tackle the insurgency.

People across the country lit candles and staged vigils as parents bade final farewells to their children during mass funerals in and around Peshawar, the volatile city on the edge of Pakistan's lawless tribal belt where the school was located.

Grief mixed with anger as people looked to the authorities — long accused of not being tough enough on extremists — to stem violence in a nation which has become a safe haven for al Qaeda-linked groups.

At a vigil in the capital Islamabad, Fatimah Khan, 38, said she was devastated by the atrocity.

In apparent response to public opinion after the attack, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced he had lifted a moratorium on the death penalty. **REUTERS**

Quoted

"I don't have words for my pain and anger ... They slaughtered those children like animals." Khan

School massacre

Pakistan seeks help from Afghans

Pakistan's army chief and the head of its main intelligence agency flew to neighboring Afghanistan on Wednesday to seek help in battling the militants behind this week's school massacre in Pakistan in which 145 people were killed.

"The time has arrived for Afghanistan and Pakistan to act together against terrorism and extremism with honesty and effectiveness," Afghan President Ashraf Ghani said in a statement. Pakistan said it had shared intelligence with Ghani. **REUTERS**

Greece. PM Samaras falls short in first round presidential vote

Greek lawmakers failed to elect a new president in a first round of voting on Wednesday, leaving Prime Minister Antonis Samaras still looking for as many as 20 votes from independents and small parties to keep his coalition government in office.

With two more rounds still to come, a win for the government had not been expected on Wednesday but the result was at the lower end of expectations,

Greek Prime Minister Antonis Samaras / REUTERS

just meeting the minimum threshold officials had seen as satisfactory before the vote.

Of the 300 members of parliament, 160 voted in favor of the government's candidate Stavros Dimas with 135 against and five absent, short of the 200-vote supermajority needed to elect a president in the first round.

Greek media had speculated the government could win between 161 and 167 votes but only five deputies crossed the floor to vote with the 155 members of the ruling coalition. **REUTERS**

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Tech. BlackBerry woos keyboard loyalists with launch of Classic

BlackBerry Ltd., launched its long-awaited Classic on Wednesday, a smartphone it hopes will help it win back market share and woo those still using older versions of its physical keyboard devices.

The Canadian mobile technology company said the new device, which bears striking similarities to its once wildly popular Bold and Curve handsets, boasts a larger screen, longer battery life, an expanded app library with access to offerings from Amazon's Android App store, and a browser three times faster than the one on its legacy devices.

"The conversation about BlackBerry has changed in the last year," company CEO John Chen said as he launched the Classic at Manhattan's upscale Cipriani restaurant.

He said BlackBerry had listened to its fans and brought back the command bar functionality that helped make its legacy phones easy to navigate.

When the company initially introduced its new BlackBerry 10 operating system and devices early in 2012, it put more emphasis on touchscreens, alienating many fans of its physical keyboard.

Those who moved to the new physical keyboard phones that BlackBerry launched later were unhappy that command keys such as the Menu, Back, Send and End buttons, along with the trackpad, had been dropped. REUTERS

BlackBerry CEO John Chen introduces the new BlackBerry Classic smartphone during the launch event. / REUTERS

Quoted

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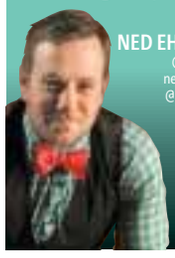

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1 Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel scooped on their own baby announcement

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

There's at least one member of *NSYNC who might be dropped from Justin Timberlake and Jessica Biel's Christmas card list, as Joey Fatone went and announced the couple's pregnancy before they could.

"He told me a while ago, and I kept my mouth shut, but I can talk about it now," Fatone tells InTouch. I'm just guessing here, Joey, but I'm pretty sure when Justin said you can talk about it now he didn't mean to a tabloid. Your baby shower gift better be pretty spectacular, is all I'm saying.

Fatone, by the way, is super-stoked for the couple. "Jessica is awesome, and Justin is a kid at heart," he says. Yeah, about that. A less identifiable source tells the National Enquirer that Biel is a bit concerned Timberlake isn't quite ready for all this parenting stuff. "They've spent little time together during Jessica's pregnancy" because of Timberlake's ongoing concert tour, the source says. "Justin pretends he doesn't have a care, but you can see how antsy he is. He knows it won't be long before his life changes. Now she's concerned it might be more than Justin can handle." But whatever happens, we can rest assured that Fatone will let us know about it first.

Daily video

'Christmas (Baby Please Come Home),' year 28

YOUTUBE, LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN

With David Letterman wrapping up his "Late Show" run, he's also saying goodbye to a 28-year holiday tradition of having Darlene Love perform "Christmas (Baby Please Come Home)" on his last show before Christmas. To honor the tradition — and, let's face it, one of songs of all time — the Letterman team has put together a super-cut of Love performing on the show over the years. Love has announced that, out of respect, she'll no longer perform the song on TV after Letterman retires, so enjoy it while you can.

2 Wreath Witherspoon is now a thing, thanks to Mindy Kaling

Mindy Kaling has launched a new holiday tradition with the introduction of the "Wreath Witherspoon," as seen in last week's episode of on "The Mindy Project." And now the crafty home decoration — a traditional Christmas wreath adorned with photos of Oscar-winning actress (and "Wild" star) Reese Witherspoon — has been given the seal of approval by Witherspoon herself. Witherspoon reposted Kaling's Instagram of various fan interpretations of the gag exclaiming, "Love it!" Maybe she'll even be making one herself this year.

Mindy Kaling made a "Wreath Witherspoon."

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Actors: Who broke through in 2014

Every year brings a new batch of people we'll be sure to watch in the future. This year saw people surprising us on unexpectedly great shows, a woman in a twist on Jane Austen and even a little girl.

Allison Tolman

"Fargo" was a show that shouldn't have worked but did, spectacularly. And one of the biggest reasons it worked was Allison Tolman's performance as incredibly pregnant and nice-to-a-fault Minnesota police deputy Molly Solverson. In a series stuffed with characters conniving (Martin Freeman's Lester Nygaard) and sociopathic (Billy Bob Thornton's Lorne Malvo), Tolman provided the much-needed human center. **NED EHRBAR**

CHRIS LARGE, FX

Mackenzie Foy

Working amongst a star-studded cast must be at least a little intimidating for a young actress, but there was no hint of that in Mackenzie Foy's memorable turn in Christopher Nolan's "Interstellar." Playing Murph, the 10-year-old daughter of Matthew McConaughey's reluctant astronaut Cooper, Foy turns in a poignant performance as a child who knows she's unlikely to see her father again. **LAKSHMI GANDHI**

PARAMOUNT PICTURES

Gugu Mbatha-Raw

Before the Jane Austen movie subversion "Belle," this British actress had done some "Doctor Who" and a Tom Hanks movie ("Larry Crowne") no one saw. But it was her quivering yet resilient turn as a mixed-race aristo that made her one of the next best things. It's a shame few bothered with the melodrama "Beyond the Lights": she's even better as a self-destructing Beyonce type. **MATT PRIGGE**

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Consumers rush to get free TV after Supreme Court ruling

U.S. households to get free TV with slick little micro antenna device engineered to pull in all over-the-air TV channels for free as law forces network giants to broadcast all TV signals regionally to all 50 states

Free TV: Crystal clear HDTV picture with no cable, no satellite or internet connection and no monthly bills

NATIONWIDE - Consumers just got handed a really good reason to get rid of cable and satellite bills.

Everyone fed up with high cable and satellite bills, huge channel bundles and poor customer service are now flocking to get a slick little micro antenna device that lets U.S. households watch broadcast TV legally without paying a cable or satellite company for it and no monthly bills.

So much attention is now being focused on this slick little device since the High Court handed down the big win for consumers.

The landmark decision highlights the public's ability to get all the top rated national TV network and regional shows broadcast over the air absolutely free.

The only thing consumers need to do to get the slick little micro antenna device is call the Free TV Order Hotline beginning at 8:30am this morning or simply return the Free TV Claim Form printed at the bottom of this page before the 3-day postmark deadline ends.

Everyone who does is getting the slick little $88 device at a real steal because it pulls in crystal-clear digital TV channels for free with no monthly bills.

The target audience for the slick little micro antenna device has been young urban professionals who don't want to watch more than 20 or 30 live TV channels. But now older folks are snapping up the slick little device because it's rapidly becoming popular for those on fixed incomes and anyone who just doesn't want to pay a cable or satellite bill anymore.

"When advanced technology enables consumers to just plug in a simple device to get free TV, consumers are the winners," said David Martin, Senior Analyst at CompTek, the company that makes the sleek little micro antenna device that works on virtually any TV.

"This special advertising feature is being so widely published because there's never a monthly bill to pay and all the channels you get are absolutely free," Martin said.

"That's why the slick little device is not like being tied to a cable or satellite company. The device is engineered to access solely over-the-air signals that include all the top rated national and all broadcast stations, like DISNEY (ABC), COMCAST (NBC), CBS, 21st Century FOX (FOX), PBS, CW and about 90% of the most watched TV shows like America's Got Talent, NCIS, The Big Bang Theory, 60 Minutes, The Bachelorette, Blue Bloods, Dateline, Person of Interest, American Idol, The Voice, Dancing With the Stars, CSI, Two and a Half Men, Sunday Night Football plus news, weather and sports all for free with no monthly bills," Martin said.

That means consumers who get the slick little device can channel surf through all the nations top favorite TV shows. The number of shows and channels consumers get depends on where they live. People living in large metropolitan areas can get up to 53 crystal-clear digital channels, while people in outlying areas will get less. That means even consumers in rural areas that pull in NBC, ABC, CBS, FOX and PBS broadcasts will still get hundreds of shows each year to watch for free.

"It's so simple all you do is just plug it into the back of your TV and place the razor thin micro device on a window or wall, then autoscan does all the rest. It works on virtually any model TV and you get a stunning HDTV quality picture," Martin said.

"It just doesn't make any sense to keep paying for TV when you can get all the top rated network channels and hundreds of shows absolutely free," he said.

But there is no time to waste, early reports show the free TV Hotlines are extremely busy.

So, if lines are busy keep trying, all calls will be answered. *(Continues on next page)*

FREE TV WITH NO CABLE BILLS: Thanks to a slick little micro antenna device that plugs into the back of any TV, consumers are getting free crystal-clear digital channels without cable or satellite. Its like getting a new HDTV for free. That's why U.S. residents are flooding the Free TV Hotlines and rushing to the Post Office to return the Free TV Claim Form reprinted at the bottom of this page. Consumers in all 50 states who want to get Free TV with no monthly bills just need to call within 72 hours or beat the 3-day postmark deadline. Consumers should begin calling the free TV Hotlines at **1-888-862-3559 Ext.60631** beginning at 8:30am or be sure the Free TV Claim Form is postmarked by midnight 3 days from today's publication date.

(Continued from previous page)

WHO WINS IN SUPREME COURT'S LANDMARK DECISION

WINNERS:

CONSUMERS

Consumers who get a slick little micro antenna device like the razor thin Clear-Cast® brand will get free TV with no monthly bills. The courts ruling emboldens the ability for consumers to legally use the slick little device in their own home to get free TV. The simple device is engineered to pull in nothing but free TV channels in crystal-clear digital picture with no cable, satellite or internet connection. That's why this slick little micro antenna is a real steal at just $88 because it is such a smart alternative for everyone who is sick and tired of paying cable and satellite bills.

NETWORKS AND TV STATIONS

With the victory, all major networks and TV stations get to protect their copyrights, but they must continue to comply with Federal Law 47CFR SEC. 1.4000 which allows consumers who have a slick little micro antenna device to receive all the crystal-clear over-the-air broadcast channels for free. Shown here are a handful of the major networks that must broadcast over the air channels that consumers can receive for free with the slick little micro antenna devices that saves money by not picking up expensive cable only channels like ESPN so there's never a monthly bill for consumers to pay.

Network trademarks and programs are the property of their respective owners and are not affiliated with or endorsing the antenna devices. Consumers report the crystal-clear picture quality with the Clear-Cast brand micro antenna device is the best quality picture they've ever seen.

MOVIE STUDIOS

Hollywood cheered the high court's decision because consumers who have a slick little micro antenna device will receive all of the major network Hollywood movies broadcast over the air for free.

SOURCE: COMPTEK 8000 FREEDOM AVE. N. CANTON, OH 44720

LOSERS:

AEREO

Aereo will likely suspend its business since the court's decision after it developed a way to bootleg major TV network's content. Aereo charged subscribers $8 to $12 a month to lease a dime size remote antenna located in the company's facility.

DEVICE MAKERS

The Computer & Communications Industry Association backed Aereo's position, having concerns that the ruling could be detrimental to other cloud services.

CORD CUTTERS

TV viewers in large cities such as New York, Dallas and Boston who relied on Aereo's service that provided more than two dozen local channels.

TO GET FREE TV CALL: 1-888-862-3559 Ext.60631

THE FREE TV HOTLINES ARE EXTREMELY BUSY. IF YOU COULD NOT GET THROUGH RETURN THE FORM BELOW TO GET FREE TV

ON THE WAY: Lucky U.S. residents who beat the 72-hour order deadline or the 3-day postmark deadline are on the lookout for their postal carrier because thousands of the Clear-Cast brand micro antenna devices are being delivered daily to U.S. households.

RETURN THIS FORM

MUST BE POSTMARKED BY MIDNIGHT 3 DAYS FROM TODAY'S PUBLICATION DATE

MAIL TO: National TV Processing Center
P.O. Box 9971 Canton, OH 44711-0971

IMPORTANT: There are no monthly bills with Clear-Cast and all the channels you get are Free. You only need one Clear-Cast brand micro antenna device for each TV that you want Free channels on:

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I get 50% off the 2nd unit

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TV watch list

DRAMA

‘Elementary’

Holmes and Watson join up with the police to hunt down someone who’s killed a cop, and Holmes tries to figure out who has been sharing things he said at sobriety meetings. **10 P.M., CBS**

Joan Watson is on the case. The case, in this instance, appears to be an ominous green circle of light that Joan seeks to defeat with her own flashlight. / CBS

COMEDY

‘The McCarthys’

The family partakes in their annual tradition — the Red Sox Swap. See, they’re in Boston, so they won’t do a Yankee swap. The rules are slightly different, though: You win big less often, but more recently. **9:30 P.M., CBS**

AWARDS

The People Magazine Awards

This is a new awards show, run by the celeb mag and hosted by Nick Cannon. They’re going to honor such things as comedy star and hero of the year. Jennifers Aniston and Lopez will be there. **9 P.M., NBC**

TALK SHOWS

‘Jimmy Kimmel Live’

Christine Baranski is Jimmy’s guest for the night, and Jenny Lewis is his musical performer. Think she’ll break out the fake beard she wore in her music video? **11:35 P.M., ABC**

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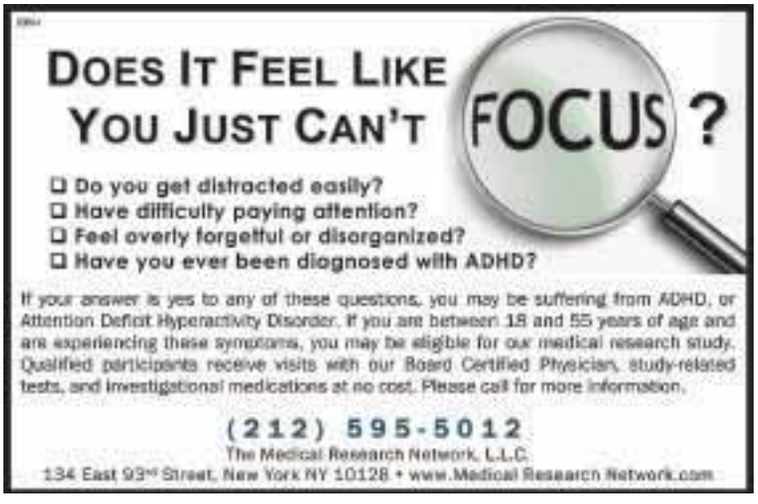
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What happens to Kris Kringle after Christmas

The documentary "I Am Santa Claus," now on Netflix Instant, shows what mall Kris Kringles do year-round. / ALL PHOTOS BY VIRGIL FILMS ENTERTAINMENT

Interview. The director of the documentary "I Am Santa Claus" talks about delving into an odd world.

It took Tommy Avallone awhile to realize Santa Claus wasn't real. "I tend to believe things longer than most," he tells us while promoting "I Am Santa Claus," a new documentary about Santas — which is to say the people who pretend to be him in malls.

The film, which had a brief theatrical run in November and is now streaming on Netflix Instant, trails a group of bearded men from across the country for the whole year, revealing a tight-knit world few probably knew existed — one of conventions and "fraternal orders." It boasts a broad diversity of characters, from one who's very religious to another who's active in the gay bear community.

"You wonder: What life do these guys have on the 26th?" Avallone says. Most face some level of economic hardships; some live off Social Security.

"I Am Santa Claus" is bouncy and funny, but it can be melancholic and depressing. Avallone made sure to shift to a more serious tone at times. "It was just like, 'Let's slow Christmas down and make these happy, jolly songs kind of depressing,'" he says. "At the same time we wanted to bring humor, like showing Santa getting drunk."

It was a new subject for Avallone in other ways. "I'm not really a Christmas fanatic. I've always thought the holiday was kind of stressful. I was a Halloween or Thanksgiving guy," he says. But he warmed to it. "To see someone go through it for the first time, of being Santa and having a kid on his lap, really making that kid happy, made me get it. I understand why people are so into this holiday. It's still not my favorite holiday."

MATT PRIGGE
@mattprigge
matt.prigge@metro.us

Beyond the mat

The wrestler

One of the more upbeat surprises was gaining the involvement of wrestler Mick Foley, who it turns out is a giant Christmas fanatic and whose house includes a Christmas room. In addition to becoming a producer, Foley even became, for the film, a Santa himself.

"At first it was weird. But you slowly saw him getting into it. He got the suit, he took a class, and once that first kid was on his lap he was just sold," Avallone remembers. "He was calling me every day. If he was nearby he'd say, 'Cool if I come over and we'll edit all night?' He was interested in getting the best story possible."

DIRECTOR TOMMY AVALLONE WITH MICK FOLEY

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Timothy Spall becomes a painter for 'Mr. Turner'

Interview. The prolific British actor has more than a few tales to tell.

Timothy Spall takes on the role of 19th century painter J.M.W. Turner in "Mr. Turner," out Friday. / SONY PICTURES CLASSICS

TIMOTHY SPALL
GETTY IMAGES

You don't get very far into a conversation with British character actor Timothy Spall without him slipping into a tangent. For instance, the interview is in a room at Los Angeles's InterContinental Hotel, a name that brings to mind an anecdote, apparently. "InterContinental, I worked in one once. It was the worst place," Spall says. "I spent all day washing pastry tins in boiling hot water without any soap. My hands, it was like I was wearing rubber gloves, they were so fat and pink. And the chef said, 'Oh by the way, there's some rubber gloves over there.' 'You F—tard!'" He lets out a hearty laugh.

Aside from a long ago stint as a dishwasher, Spall is first and foremost an actor. And his latest work involves embodying the complicated life of famed British painter J.M.W. Turner in Mike Leigh's "Mr. Turner," something he ended up doing much more preparation for than he was expecting.

"We'd first talked about it seven years ago. Then in 2010, Mike had me into his office and told me his next film would be about Turner. He said, 'And also, if you don't mind, I'd like you to start learning how to paint now,'" Spall remembers. That led to some very extensive fine art lessons. "There's about 300 different images that we made and about 24 paintings. I eventually ended up doing a full-scale copy of 'Snow Storm: Steam-Boat off a Harbour's Mouth.' I don't quite believe it. I've got it on my wall. I look at it and go, 'I didn't do that.'"

Spall is appropriately humble. "In the end I got to a point where I was about up to the standard of how good he was when he was about 8 or 9," he says. "The terrible thing is the first thing I had to film when you see him painting is I had to paint a straight line. I'll tell you what, with a full crew of 60 people watching you playing J.M.W. Turner? That's where the two years of practice came in handy."

Quoted

"We made him a man that could've said a million things, but all he did was he computed them and imploded them back into himself in these noises." Spall, on Turner's grunts

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This building is being constructed through the Low-Income Affordable Marketplace Program (LAMP) and the New Housing Opportunities Program (New HOP) of the New York City Housing Development Corporation and the Low Income Rental Program (LIRP) and the Mixed Income Program of the New York City Department of Housing Preservation and Development.

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2 bedroom	$1,470	37	2 people 3 people 4 people	$52,183 - $67,200 $52,183 - $75,600 $52,183 - $83,900
3 bedroom	$1,179	12	3 people 4 people 5 people 6 people	$42,549 - $45,360 $42,549 - $50,340 $42,549 - $54,420 $42,549 - $58,440
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When is the Deadline? Applications must be postmarked or submitted online no later than February 20, 2015. No late applications will be considered.

What Happens After You Submit an Application? After the deadline, applications are selected for review through a lottery process. If yours is selected and you appear to qualify, you will be invited to an interview to continue the process of determining your eligibility. Interviews are usually scheduled from 2 to 10 months after the application deadline. You will be asked to bring documents that verify your household size, identity of members of your household, and your household income.

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The best local finds

Shop. Before you buy everyone on your list an Amazon gift card this year, remember: You live in NYC, home to a wealth of unique boutiques. We've asked the owners of some of our favorite shops for their gift picks.

RAQUEL LANERI
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PLUS

Babel Fair

260 Elizabeth St., 646-360-3685

Erica Kiang's SoHo shop has become a favorite among hip women, with its eclectic mix of reasonably priced goods from around the world. So what does the chic city gal want this year? Kiang recommends Babel Fair's shag jacket ($119) and leather bucket bag ($129).

ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED

Warm

131 Mott St., 212-925-1200

Winnie Beattie grew up in Hawaii, and her sunny little shop — which she opened with husband, Rob Magnotta, whom she met while surfing — attempts to bring some tropical warmth into the big city with items such as Michele Quan's turquoise and silver moon necklace ($480), which "embodies the urban hippie vibe of our store," says Beattie, and Hemen Biarritz's cozy unisex long johns ($124) and henleys ($96).

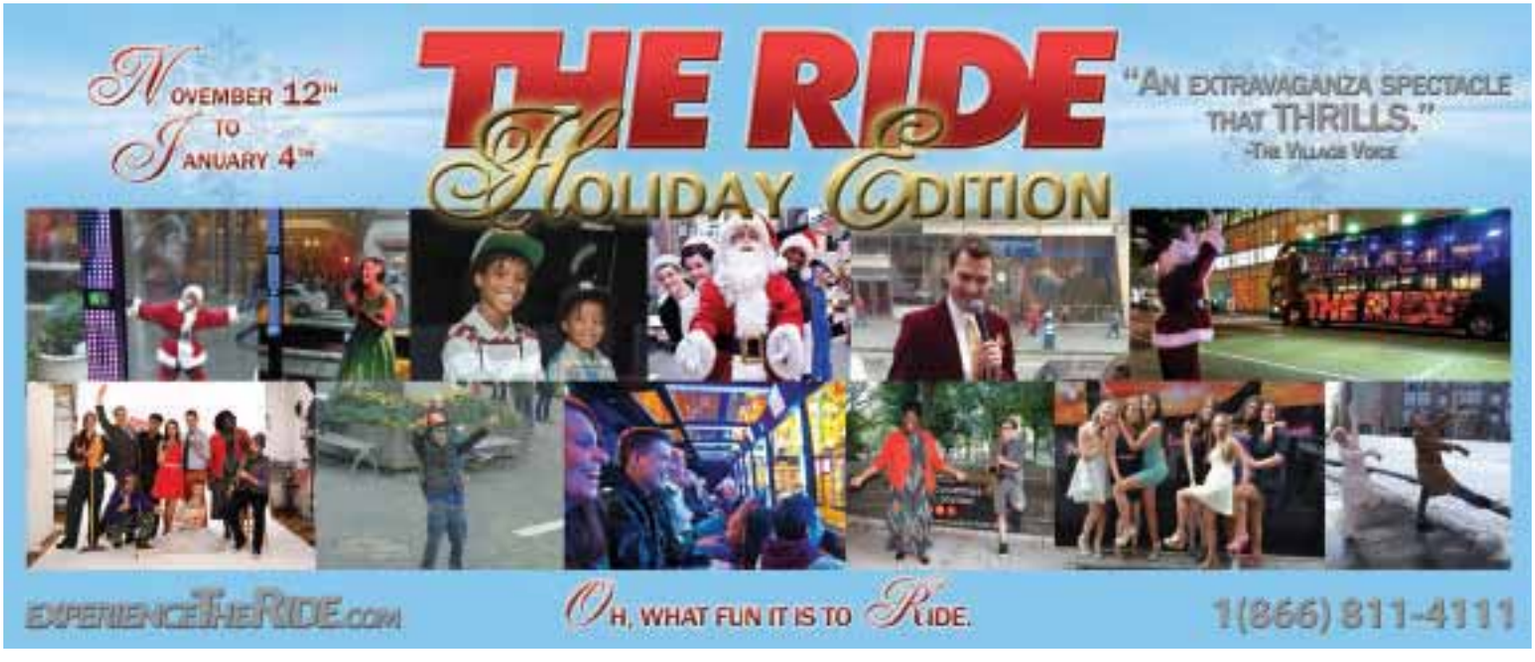
NATASHA JAHANGIR

PROVIDED

Love, Adorned

269 Elizabeth St., 212-431-5683

This Nolita boutique is a treasure trove of vintage, one-of-a-kind and artisanal goods, informed by owner Lori Leven's years of traveling and collecting as a buyer. Among the wares: vintage African indigo textiles ($260) and a utilitarian concrete and brass box, which Leven says is a great gift for a man. The jewels, however, are the stars here, like a raw lapis and yellow gold ring from independent Greek designers Margoni ($1,905).



Personnel of New York

9 Greenwich Ave., 212-924-0604

Kristi Paras' and Emilio Ramirez's West Village boutique has been hailed as the next Opening Ceremony, thanks to its hip apparel brands such as Dusen Dusen and Creatures of Comfort and their globe-spanning assortment of gifts from hard-to-find artists and designers. A metal neuve candelabra ($120) "would make a damn fine-looking Hannukah menorah," says Ramirez, and Madrid perfumer Oliver & Co.'s candles ($65), which come in graphic, colorful packaging, "are to die for."

Kiosk

540 LaGuardia Place, 212-226-8601

Husband-and-wife duo Alisa Grifo and Marco ter Haar Romeny run this small design store, which focuses on weird, wonderful and useful products from around the world — like a classic kettle from Finland ($110) or a rolling pin from Denmark ($32).

NATASHA JAHANGIR

Top Hat

245 Broome St., 212-677-4240

Nina Allen sells beguiling curios like fake snowballs from Finland (the store's highest seller), hyper-specific birdcalls from the mountains of Southern France and handmade porcelain fruits from England. But there are more mainstream options, too — such as a plaid mohair blanket from legendary Spanish loomers Mantas Ezcaray ($230), hand-knit children's shoe socks from France ($32) and a graphic green-and-white dartboard with darts from Finnish maker Piipo, which has been making these boards for approximately 60 years ($60).

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NATASHA JAHANGIR

Dinosaur Hill

306 E. 9th St., 212-473-5850

FAO Schwarz? Puh-leeze. For more unexpected children's gifts, head to this East Village toy box, which owner Pamela Pier has stocked chock-full of surprising goodies, from traditional Peruvian arpilleras ($125), to colorful felt sheep dolls from Tibet ($66).

Still House

117 E. Seventh St.
212-539-0200

This gorgeous jewel box of a store has the serenity and exquisite taste of an art gallery, without the pretension. Pratt grad Urte Tylaite has gathered quite the collection of stunning objects, including ethically sourced, one-of-a-kind jewels.

Pink Olive

439 E. Ninth St., 212-780-0036

Grace Kang's tiny, enchanted East Village boutique offers whimsical baby gifts, letterpress cards, original artwork and more adorable things. Who can resist the handmade Henry the Fox ($168) or Confetti the Unicorn Doll, wearing a star-spangled bathing suit ($48). A wood-mounted surrealist fairy tale print by artist Kristiana Parn ($65) — is perfect for a dreamy kid's room (or an adult's).

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Coral & Tusk Fox Portrait

Start his or her art collection young.
$144 (FRAMED), CORALANDTUSK.COM

J.Crew Kids moccasins in Tartan

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$39.50, JCREW.COM

Operation ResCUTE

Teach the little ones about rescue animals with this adorable pup. 100 percent of the profits goes to shelters.
$29.99, OPERATIONRESCUTE.COM

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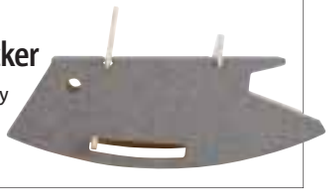

ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED

Misha and Puff clothes

Expect a lot of "awwwws!" Misha and Puff creates adorable, timeless clothes, hand knit in Peru. **PRICES VARY, MISHA-AND-PUFF.COM**

TINA CHADHA
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spa Jolie

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Last-minute lifesavers

Gifts for him and her. It's crunch time, so get shopping.

Oops, you did it again. You swore off waiting until the last minute to do your holiday shopping and yet, here we are. Lucky for you, we have ideas for everyone — even the wacky science nerd — on your list.

TINA CHADHA
@TinaatMetro
tina.chadha@metro.us

For the city girl

Here's how to stay warm and stylin'. **HILFIGER COLLECTION HAT, $70, TOMMY HILFIGER 212-223-1824**

For the tween

All she has to do is flip the 3-inch touchscreen to take a perfect selfie. **SAMSUNG NX MINI SMART CAMERA, $349, SAMSUNG**

For the design buff

Not only is this the cutest decorative object, ever — but it's also a candle. **ILLUME GLEAMING ISLA CANDLE, $24-$36, ANTHROPOLOGIE.COM**

For the professional

He'll impress clients, and the fashionistas in the office, with this tweed and leather briefcase. **AX ARMANI EXCHANGE BRIEFCASE, $148.80, ARMANIEXCHANGE.COM**

For the fashionista

She so needs Alexander Wang's first fragrance for Balenciaga. **'B. BALENCIAGA' EAU DE PARFUM, $110, SEPHORA.COM**

For the art lover

You know that vintage portrait you're looking for? None will compare to the sophisticated ladies in an Alex Katz painting. Prop this collection of his work on your bar cart or mantle instead. **ALEX KATZ REVISED AND EXPANDED, $69.95, PHAIDON.COM**

For the mid-century enthusiast

Ikea created this simple, stylish limited-edition collection based on some favorites from the 50s-70s. **IKEA EKENASET CHAIR, $199, IKEA.COM**

For the glam girl

She'll bust out Mally's chic gold lipsticks all the time. **MALLY INSTANT IMPACT DUO, $36.36, QVC.COM**

For your bestie

So everyone knows. **THE GREAT LAKES GOODS ORNAMENT, $20, ABCHOME.COM**

For Dad

His oatmeal just got better with pure maple shavings. **TONEWOOD MAPLE CUBE, $16.99, TONEWOODMAPLE.COM**

For your guy

What's better than socks? Socks in a cute mason jar. **LEVI'S 048 NEEDLE SOCK JAR, $30, URBANOUTFITTERS.COM**

For the chef

This new line from All-Clad features flared edges for drip-free pouring, ergonomic handles and a design that makes for easy stacking and storing. **ALL-CLAD TK, $44.95-$1,599.99, WILLIAMS-SONOMA.COM**

For the yoga lover

Her resolution will be so much easier to keep on this cheery mat. **GAIAM ELEPHANT REVERSIBLE YOGA MAT, $31.98, GAIAM.COM**

For the science nerd

This puzzle forms a 3-D anatomical representation of a woolly mammoth and is his or her new favorite desk accessory. **ANATOMICAL KIT, $38, THEEVOLUTIONSTORE.COM**

For the hostess

These smokeless, long burning tapers don't drip and are made with 100 percent beeswax. Plus, 10 percent of the profits are donated to organizations that support beekeeping. **BIG DIPPER WAX WORKS CANDLES, $10, WHOLE FOODS MARKET**

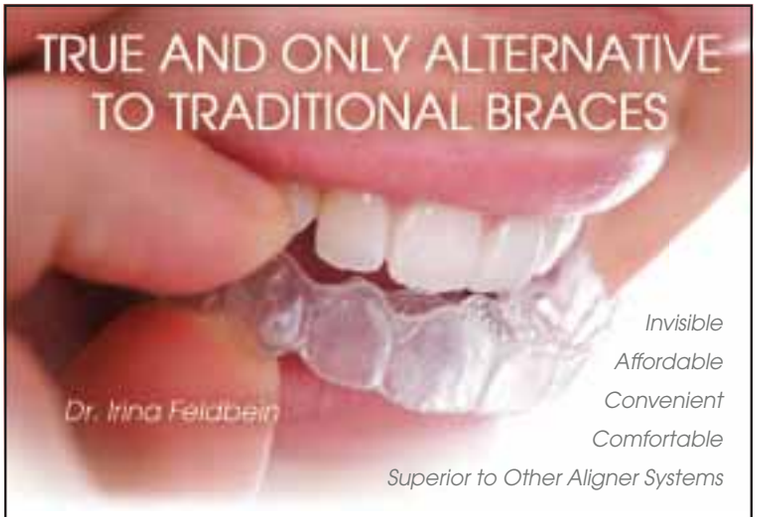
For your pup

He needs a place to snuggle. **MAJESTIC PET,$85, 11MAIN.COM**

For the wino

Mom will get a kick out of these. **WINE STOPPERS, $22 EACH, CRANEANDCANOPY.COM**

ALL PHOTOS PROVIDED



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PLUS

End the cycle of forgettable dates

Being real. Dating coach Laurel House says singles shouldn't be afraid to be vulnerable.

A first date shouldn't feel like a job interview. / PHOTODISC

Laurel House knows how difficult it is to talk about being unlucky in love. But that hasn't stopped the dating coach from often talking about her own romantic missteps.

"In my coaching, I often use myself as an example," House says. "I understand what you are going through ... I've probably been there myself."

One mistake House says she sees many singles hesitate before letting romantic interests see their true personalities.

"I call it 'getting raw.' If you look at the risk and reward [on a date], you have to get raw," says House. "The reward is that you can take a conversation that's benign and turn it into something special."

We asked House — the author of the new book "Screwing the Rules: The No-Games Guide to Love" — to break down what "getting raw" means.

Ask lots of questions

And she doesn't mean the typical first date questions about your job or how many siblings you have — those can feel too much like a job interview. "Ask questions that are going to spark something real," advises House. "Be yourself. At the very least, you aren't going to be bored."

House recommends asking your date about their families and childhoods, but using those questions as a springboard into a conversation about values. "And then you can say something like 'I have a close relationship with my family too. Five years ago my mom had an accident and what's interesting is that since then we've been closer," she adds.

Figure out the message you want to send

While coaching clients, House always recommends having three stories in mind that show who you really are, so pick wisely. "People connect through storytelling," House explains. "That's how we relate. So ask, 'Do I want to walk away after having a forgettable conversation or do I want something real?'" It pays to be honest.

LAKSHMI GANDHI
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lakshmi.gandhi@metro.us

Be selective

Have you had a string of terrible online dates?

"There are things that are avoidable," she says. "I tell people to 'prequalify' their online dates by closely looking at their profiles. If you don't even know if you want to be picked by him, don't go on the date."

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A party for everyone

New Year's Eve. Leave the shivering in Times Square to the tourists and celebrate in your own way.

Marquee will keep you in the partying mood with a four-hour open bar on New Year's Eve. / PROVIDED

Dancers

Close out the year under the disco ball with a celebrity DJ setting the beat: Dress your best for former Swedish House mafioso Sebastian Ingrosso and DJ Cedric Gervais at **Marquee** (289 10th Ave.) with a four-hour open bar ($200, 8 p.m.); **Madison Square Garden** has a double bill of Skrillex and Diplo ($55-$150, 8 p.m.); DJ Koze and Wareika headline a 42-hour set beginning at 10 p.m. on NYE at Williamsburg's **Output** (74 Wythe Ave., $80-$100); DJ Joseph Capriati, with the help of liquid nitrogen fog, will keep you dancing at **Space Ibiza** (637 W. 50th St.) beginning at 3 a.m. for seven hours until the shades come up for the first sunrise of 2015.

All-nighters

These are the things you can find at **Webster Hall** (125 E. 11th St.) on New Year's Eve, when all four floors host a party that goes until noon on Jan. 1: circus performers, eight DJs, an open bar from 8 p.m. to 2 a.m., a 100,000-balloon drop and probably a few things no one will believe when you try to explain them. And you can parlay your partying into brunch thanks to a continental breakfast. *Tickets start at $99*

Singles

With more than 350 unattached partiers expected to pack **Stitch Lounge** (247 W. 37th St.) for Single and the City's lonely hearts club bash, there's bound to be someone who catches your eye — or at least your lips for a midnight kiss. The open bar from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. will get the party started, followed by free light bites, icebreakers, giveaways and a Champagne toast. *25+; $65 advance, $100 door*

Endorphin junkies

Start 2015 off on the right foot — and hungry for the ball to drop. **Madame Tussauds** (234 W. 42nd St.) is throwing a party with all your favorite celebrities, food and an open bar from 7 p.m. to midnight. That should give you enough time to imbibe enough to think those selfies you took with the wax figures are real. Just apply an Instagram filter and who's to say you didn't crash the city's most exclusive party? *Tickets start at $119, party goes until 1 a.m.*

Homebodies

The best part about New Year's on your sofa is the reasonably priced Champagne, no high heels or freezing on the curb trying to hail a cab home. So cuddle up with your smelly cat and get your remote ready, because as soon as the year ticks over the entire run of "Friends" will be available on **Netflix**. *$7.99 a month*

EVA KIS
@thisiskis
eva.kis@metro.us

Last dinner of 2014

Where to eat

New and hot in modern American is **Tuome** (536 E. Fifth St.), where chef Thomas Chen is serving a seven-course prix fixe menu ($95, $125 with Champagne toast) that includes duck with sunchoke and chinkiang gastrique and a Chinese beignet with goat's milk caramel. WD-50 may be a footnote in NYC culinary history, but chef Wylie Dufresne can still be found at his East Village restaurant **Alder** (157 Second Ave.) For New Year's, he's taking diners on a culinary tour of NYC through dishes inspired by the city's neighborhoods ($125, add $75 for drink pairing). The five-course Austrian spread at **Edi & the Wolf** (102 Ave. C) caught our eye with a bone marrow-crusted ribeye and yuzu strudel ($85-$105). And closing out its debut year is Clinton Hill's **Emily** (919 Fulton St.), which raked in accolades for its "fiercely American pizza." Try them out on New Year's Eve, when the regular menu will be accompanied by a half dozen sparkling wines and noisemakers for the midnight toast.

Alder's Chinese beignets
PROVIDED

Endorphin junkies

Start 2015 off on the right foot — and then the left, and then the right, and then the left again for 4 miles — at the **New York Road Runners' Midnight Run**. Warm up at the free pre-race dance party with live music starting at 10 p.m. (Then shock your system into resolution mode at the annual Coney Island Polar Dip.) *Free to $65, Central Park Bandshell*

Celebrity stalkers

There's a better reason to be in Times Square than waiting cold

Opening. The French are here to class up your mustard game

A new Upper West Side boutique has something you've never seen on tap.

Maille, which has been making Dijon mustard for 265 years, just opened its first store outside of Europe at 185 Columbus Ave. The Maille Mustard Boutique has more than 20 varieties, including five of them on tap — and mustard sommelier Pierette Huttner on hand to guide your tasting and, yes, suggest food (and drink) pairings.

Ketchup is all well and good for fries, but mustard's uses go beyond the fast food realm, Huttner tells Metro. "In French cuisine, mustard is the secret ingredient that adds more dimension and flavor to any recipe," she says.

While she insists there is no wrong match for the right mustard, she enjoys the condiment in vinaigrettes for salads and vegetable dishes, or as a glaze on meat. "I even add a touch of Maille Fig and Coriander Mustard when making a fruit tart for a delightful and unexpected kick."

EVA KIS

Pierette Huttner cut the mustard to become Maille's sommelier.
PROVIDED

my city. now. metro

Freebies

Holiday treats

The venerable Italian institution Veniero's Bakery is celebrating 120 years in the East Village with free cookies and outdoor caroling by the Third Street Music School Settlement. The country's oldest pastry shop and oldest community music school will be handing out specially made cookies and singing carols, respectively, in front of the bakery at 342 E. 11th St. on Dec. 18 at 4 p.m.

Whether you're in Rockefeller Center to see the Christmas tree or get in some last-minute shopping, La Maison du Chocolat has a treat for you. On Dec. 22, the chocolatier is reprising its Hot Chocolate Night, with complimentary tastings and macarons. The store, at 30 Rockefeller Plaza, will be open through midnight.

Every night of Hanukkah through Dec. 23, Chabad Park Slope will light another candle on the 32-foot menorah in Grand Army Plaza. Share in the celebration with free latkes and music to mark the Jewish holiday (various times, chabadparkslope.com). On Dec. 31, catch the New Year's Eve fireworks over Prospect Park from the plaza, which will have free entertainment and refreshments.

CHRISTMAS

Christmas in Brooklyn

Dec. 19, 7:30 p.m.
Barclays Center
620 Atlantic Ave.
$25-$260, barclayscenter.com
If you could celebrate Christmas in Brooklyn with LL Cool J and Run DMC, why wouldn't you? Catch these legendary rappers along with DJ Z-Trip, Lecrae, K. Michelle and Diggy. Just don't call it a comeback!

Ugly Sweater Run

Dec. 20, 11 a.m.
Citi Field
123-01 Roosevelt Ave., Flushing Meadows; $50-$55
theuglysweaterrun.com
Take some time off from holiday shopping and do some good for yourself! Find the ugliest sweater possible, throw it on and run a 5K. There will be hot chocolate, beer and cider waiting for you at the finish line.

Holiday Lights & Sights Tour 2

Dec. 21, 1 p.m.
The Thirsty Fan
254 W. 31st St.
$20, thethirstyfan.com
Get your start at 34th Street and gawk along a route of the holiday windows at Macy's, Saks and Lord & Taylor, the tree in Bryant Park, 6th Avenue Corporation Row, Radio City and the tree at Rockefeller Center.

Christmas movies

Dec. 23, 4 p.m.
Videology
308 Bedford Ave., Williamsburg
Free, videology.info
Instead of watching them on Netflix, be social (and have access to a full bar) at Videology. While no movie schedule is posted, here's hoping for "Home Alone 2" and "The Nightmare Before Christmas."

What the Dickens?

Dec. 29, noon
Housing Works Bookstore Café
126 Crosby St.
Free, housingworks.org
A marathon reading of "A Christmas Carol" featuring guest readers such as Jami Attenberg, Emma Straub, Adam Gopnik and more. Kicking off the event will be the New York City Master Chorale serenading you with carols.

FOOD & DRINK

Vegan Holiday Shop-Up!

Dec. 20, noon
Pine Box Rock Shop
12 Grattan St., Bushwick
veganshopup.wordpress.com
It's holiday shopping — vegan style! Try and buy amazing food items from Gone Pie, Cocoburg, Freakin' Vegan and more. Grab a drink at the bar and hit up any and all of the 20+ vendors.

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CHRISTMAS

Holiday Express

NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Through Feb. 22
New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West
Admission $19, nyhistory.org
Browse the newly acquired Jerni Collection of over 11,000 toys dating as far back as 1840, as much works of art as playthings. Much of the museum's first floor has been taken over by an immersive multimedia exhibit that showcases that most seasonal of toys, the train set.

DANCING

PROVIDED

Rebel Hearts Holiday Party

Dec. 19, 9 p.m.
Rockbar NYC, 185 Christopher St.
$5, madonnathon.weebly.com
It's going to be all Madonna, all night. Get your "Vogue" on with DJ Jene and "Celebrate" this fine "Holiday" with Madonna giveaways all night, Madonna stocking stuffers and no papa to preach. Get into the groove!

Horoscope

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. You will be inspired by an unlikely source. If you spend time helping less fortunate people, you are likely to find a kindred spirit.

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Imagine yourself in a more fulfilling career. Once you have narrowed down your options, it will be easy to determine what you need to do.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. Don't believe everything you hear. Someone will lead you astray. If you overreact, you risk being put at a disadvantage.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. You can make valuable contributions without spending too much. Donate your time to local programs that assist people in need.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. Go over personal paperwork in detail. Update your financial records and put all of your receipts and bills in order.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Cash will slip through your fingers if you donate to an unfamiliar group. Keep a close eye on your money and keep unnecessary expenditures to a minimum.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. Don't let your heart rule your head. Listen to advice. If you are infatuated with someone unsuitable, regret will follow.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. You will get terrific results when shopping for someone special. If you pick up the pace, you will accomplish more than anticipated.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. The situation on the home front will be critical. Getting out of the house and enjoying time with a friend who makes you laugh will do you good. Don't overspend.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Family tension will run high. The more you are able to achieve, the less time you will have to complain or get into an argument.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Put your talents to good use. Rather than deal with work, get together with friends, go on a trip or visit an out-of-town relative.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Don't dwell on the past. No matter how emotional you feel, remember the new year represents a new beginning. Leave disappointment behind. EUGENIA LAST

Sudoku: Easy and hard

2			7				9	6
		5		6			2	
6						7	4	
3		8		2		4		
			5		4			
		4		8		3		7
	1	3						8
	7			9		5		
4	5				1			2

	9		1		6	5	2	
	6		7			8		1
					5	6		
	1		9	2				6
6				3	1		5	
		4	5					
3		6			2		1	
	2	9	3		8		4	

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Letters

What if they were your kids?

There are still people who feel that the Brown shooting was self-defense. Such people may even feel that Rodney King's brutal beating and the killing of Amadou Diallo were justified. The young man in the Brown shooting was UNARMED — not a knife-wielding, gun-toting, muscle-bound hulk. I thought that the police were only supposed to use their firearms as a last resort or when there is no other way to stop an individual from causing deadly harm to the officer or to another person, particularly with a weapon. Basically, an individual's defense is supposed to be comparable to the degree of harm he or she is confronted with. Those who feel that unarmed minorities cannot be subdued without killing them have social, psychological or other issues. If they, their children or their parents were the unarmed suspects being choked, beat with batons or shot dead, would they feel that officers should resort to other methods rather than deadly force? I'm sure they would then agree that deadly force should be a last resort, not a first response. And if we don't know how to deal with violence and sexual assaults on our own streets and in our own military, how can we address the violence going on in other countries?

PAUL HUNTER, VIA EMAIL

letters@metro.us

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Visit us online at **Metro.us.**

Use your smartphone to find today's crossword answers! Download and open the Blippar app on your smartphone and hold the screen over the puzzle.

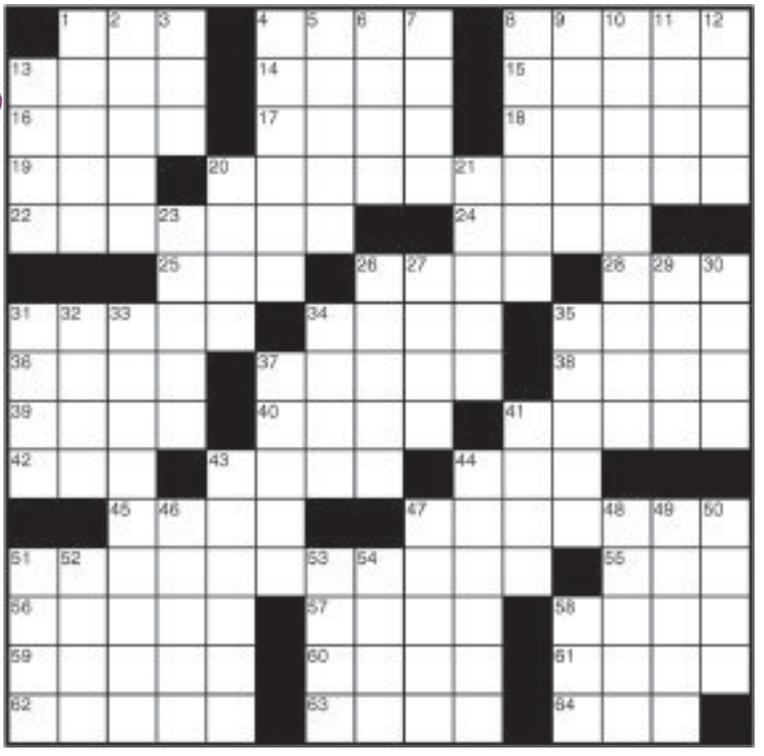
Crossword

Across

1 Boy Pharaoh
4 Depot info
8 Showed impatience, as a horse
13 Kept back
14 Claw badly
15 Boxer — Griffith
16 Chooses
17 The younger Guthrie
18 Quart, plus
19 Poet's "always"
20 Binocular owner
22 Without hesitation
24 Charges
25 Switch positions
26 Gourmet's interest
28 Hebrew T
31 Basilica areas
34 Meditation guide
35 — Raton, Fla.
36 Duffel filler
37 Roll with a hole
38 Magna Carta signer
39 Milady's
40 "Daily Planet" name
41 Portends
42 Rainbow shape
43 Sect
44 Bump hard
45 Memorable tennis champ
47 — mechanics
51 Flowers with spurs
55 Tpk.
56 "Crocodile Rock" artist
57 Hula- —
58 Whodunit suspect
59 Smug expression
60 — up (pay)
61 Bull or boar
62 In poor taste
63 Former ruler
64 Shelley offering

Down

1 Conical abode
2 Ne plus —
3 NFL events
4 Computer notes
5 Dawdle
6 — lang syne
7 Like molasses
8 Bombarded
9 Oblong vestment
10 Weathered
11 Gen. Robert — —
12 Earl — Biggers
13 Gardener, often
20 Flour holders
21 Run — of (cross)
23 Active ones
26 Tempus —
27 Galena and bauxite
29 Aspirin target
30 FedEx trucks
31 Ottoman title
32 Equal
33 Cutting
34 Liverpool poky
35 Netman Borg
37 Sunnier
41 Meadow plaints
43 Thickset
44 Kind of cable
46 Marabou
47 Salesperson's goal
48 Tire feature
49 Good for something
50 Just
51 Cozy dwelling
52 Diva — Gluck
53 One of those things
54 Solar wind components
58 RN employer



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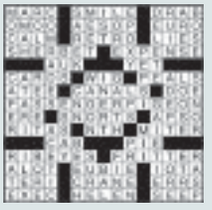

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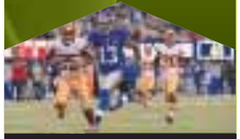
3 SPORTS

MLB

Scherzer posturing continues

The signing of pitcher Chris Capuano this week was met with a collective, "that's it?!" by Yankees fans. But it seems as though the Yankees may finally be holding true to their claims of fiscal responsibility this offseason. When asked about the possibility of the Yankees landing free agent Max Scherzer in the next few days, a source with "intimate knowledge" of Yankees operations told ESPN: "He's a great pitcher, but not even the Yankees can have three $25 [million] to $30 [million] pitchers on the payroll. You just can't."



Visit **Metro.us** to read about Odell Beckham's monster season.

IN 2014, WE LOST TRUST IN THESE FORMER STARS

If you've reached the promised land and are playing in the fantasy Super Bowl this weekend, congratulations are in order. If not, there's a good chance some players are now your enemy.

As we begin to review what went wrong, it's important to understand why a player busted. Guys that got hurt or were set up to fail by teammates' ineptitude shouldn't be written off entirely. But guys that flopped for different reasons find themselves in the "never again" category.

Larry Fitzgerald has found the end zone just twice this season. / GETTY IMAGES

Over the Hill

Everyone knows to avoid running backs as they approach 30. In hindsight, we should have applied that thinking at the wideout spot as well. Larry Fitzgerald and Andre Johnson no longer threaten defenses deep, capping their upside as possession-type receivers while youngsters Michael Floyd and DeAndre Hopkins go long. Brandon Marshall, Roddy White, Marques Colston and Reggie Wayne are more examples of older receivers nearing the end of the line.

Running in mud

The running back position is volatile because it's replaceable. The fact that Montee Ball struggled badly yet Ronnie Hillman and C.J. Anderson excelled is a monster red flag. Bishop Sankey was among the most unimpressive rookies, lacking vision, explosion and pass-game chops. Toby Gerhart, proving too slow to be effective, embarrassingly lost his job to former college quarterback Denard Robinson. Doug Martin has been among worst running backs in the NFL the last two seasons in terms of both running and pass protection. I'm done with all these backs.

Tip of the Kaep

Colin Kaepernick has the arm and the athletic ability. He's shown that's not enough. An overly conservative scheme that lacks creativity certainly hasn't helped, but Kaep consistently flops in plus spots. We can blame the receivers, the scheme and the NFC West defenses all we want, but enough is enough. Given the depth at the quarterback spot, there's just little reason to gamble on the position. Guys like Russell Wilson and Ben Roethlisberger were Round 10 picks this season.

Pickups of the week

Grab them for Week 16:

- **Joseph Randle, RB, Cowboys:** If Demarco Murray (hand) ends up sitting, Randle could shred Indy.
- **Robert Griffin III, QB, Redskins:** The Eagles bleed fantasy points to opposing quarterbacks.

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NBA. Carmelo returns to Chicago to face Bulls

Back on July 1, an electronic billboard just outside of Chicago's United Center, featured a Photoshopped picture of Carmelo Anthony in a Bulls uniform.

The Bulls went hard after Anthony in free agency, but came up short in their recruitment as the small forward re-signed with the Knicks.

Anthony returns to Chicago for the first time since the flirtation Thursday (8 p.m., TNT) and it could be a bitter trip considering the Bulls are cruising along with a 15-9 record while the Knicks (5-22) are tied with the 76ers for the most losses in the NBA. **MATT BURKE**

Carmelo Anthony. / GETTY IMAGES

NCAA

Harbaugh to 'consider' Michigan job

Jim Harbaugh is "considering" returning to Michigan to become the school's head coach, according to reports. The current 49ers head coach was a quarterback for the Wolverines in the mid-1980s. According to CBS5 in Arizona, Michigan has made a six-year, $49 million offer to Harbaugh. **MATT BURKE**

NFL. One more round for Rex vs. Patriots

Sunday's Jets-Pats game should mark an end of an era in the Patriots-Jets rivalry, one in which was pretty lopsided. The Patriots have won the AFC East in every season since Rex Ryan was named Jets coach and hold an 8-4 advantage.

"[Bill Belichick] prepares his team as well as anybody in the league, if not better than any coach in the league," Ryan said. "I do like competing against him, there's no question about it. And he knows one thing: He's going to get my very best, that's for sure. I'm looking forward to this one." **METRO**

Rex Ryan. / GETTY IMAGES

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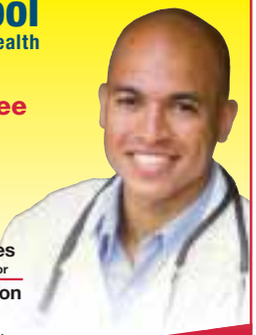

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Continued from page 2

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